Child Maltreatment

In 2020, West Virginia had 37,695 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 26,572 were referred for investigation.

There were 6,116 child victims of abuse or neglect in West Virginia in 2020, at a rate of 17.2 children per 1,000. This translates to a 3.0% increase since 2016.

Of the 6,116 children, 5,029 were first time victims.

The largest age group of victims was children under one, representing 1,140 of the 6,116.

Types of Maltreatment Victims, 2020

- 41% Physical Abuse
- 21% Psychological Maltreatment
- 33% Sexual Abuse
- 2% Medical Neglect
- 0% Neglect
- 0% Other

Child Victims by Race or Ethnicity, 2020

- 88% White
- 7% Hispanic
- 3% African American
- 0.3% Pacific Islander
- 0% Asian
- 2% Multiple Race
- 21% American Indian or Alaska Native
- 3% Unknown

- 75% of child maltreatment perpetrators in 2020 were parents of the child. 25% were non-parents or had an unknown relationship.

- 51% of West Virginia’s child victims in 2019 were female while 48% were male.

Plans of Safe Care

- In 2020, West Virginia reported 712 infants who were screened-in with prenatal substance abuse exposure.
- West Virginia reported no plans of safe care for screened-in infants.
Foster Care and Adoptions

- **11,849** total children were served by the foster care system in FY 2020.
- **7,334** were in care on the day of September 30th, 2020.
- **4,707** children entered care during the 2020 FY while **4,515** exited during the same year.
- **1,683** of West Virginia’s children were adopted while **2,705** were waiting to be adopted.

There was a **.2%** increase in the number of children in care between 2019 and 2020. Adoptions from the system also increased **.9%** from 2019 to 2020.

**96** children in West Virginia aged out and exited foster care in 2020. This is an increase from **85** in 2019 and represents a **12.9%** increase.

- Children in foster care in 2020 spent an average of **14.6** months in care.
- The average length of stay in West Virginia for children waiting to be adopted from foster care is **22.0** months.
- The average age of children waiting to be adopted in 2020 was **7.4** years old.
- The average age of adopted children was **6.3** years old.
Data from 2019 shows that 4,266 children in foster care in West Virginia were living with non-relatives while 1,477 stayed with a relative (See Pie Chart). xxii

1,161 children were staying in group homes while 37 children were classified as runaways. xxiii

2% of households in West Virginia in 2020 had a grandparent living with a grandchild. xxiv

The average length of time a child in care spent living with their current relative foster family was 4.5 months. xxv

### Child Poverty

West Virginia had 123,000 children in 2019 who lived with parents who lacked secure employment, representing 34% of all children. xxvi

xxvii

20% of West Virginia’s children lived in households with a high housing cost burden. xxviii

The average number of individuals receiving TANF fell from 12,470 in 2019 to 11,809 in 2020. This represents an 5.3% decrease. xxix

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The state spent $14,804,589 on WIC in 2021, serving 32,949 people. This represents a 2.6% decrease in total participants and a .3% increase in spending. xxi

242,180 people in West Virginia were food insecure in 2019, including 68,310 children who struggled with hunger. xxii

37.3% of households receiving SNAP benefits in West Virginia in 2019 had children. xxxiii
Health

West Virginia had 1,772 low birth-weight babies born in 2019 which is constituted as babies weighing less than 5.5 pounds. This translates to 9.8% of infants born in West Virginia in 2019.xxxiv

West Virginia had a total of 2,281 preterm births in 2019, meaning completed less than 37 weeks of gestation. 12.5% of all white babies were born premature while 17.6% of all black babies arrived prematurely in 2019. The total premature birth rate was 12.6%.xxxv

There were 1,287 births to mothers aged 15-19 in West Virginia in 2019, representing a rate of 25 in every 1,000 teen girls.xxxvi

112 infants under one died in West Virginia in 2019, representing an infant mortality rate of 6.2 per 1,000.xxxvii

Percentage of All Preterm Births by Race or Ethnicity, 2019

- White: 94%
- Black: 5%
- Hispanic: 1%

Public Health Insurance Coverage for Children, 2020

- Medicaid: 13%
- CHIP: 5%
- Uninsured: 82%

3.5% of West Virginia’s children had no health insurance in 2019. This represents 13,000 children. West Virginia is a Medicaid expansion state.xxxix

224,225 children in West Virginia were enrolled in Medicaid in 2020. This represents a 2.1% decrease from 2019. xi

36,869 children in West Virginia were in the state Child Health Insurance Program (CHIP) in 2020. This represents a 7.6% decrease from 2019. xli
Juvenile Justice System
- There were 292 total arrests for children under 18 in West Virginia in 2019.
- 8 of these arrests were for Disorderly Conduct.
- 29 arrests were made for Property Crimes.
- 53 were arrested under the charge of Drug Abuse Violations.
- 483 children lived in juvenile correction facilities in West Virginia in 2019. This is an increase from 474 kids in 2017, representing a 1.9% increase.

Teens & Youth
- 8,000 (9%) of West Virginia’s youth were both not in school and not working in 2019.
- In 2020, there were no reports of children in West Virginia aged 10-14 committing suicide, and no reports of suicide among children aged 15-19.
- 17 children under age 19 were killed by a firearm in West Virginia in 2020.

Child Welfare Services Funding
West Virginia spent $245,419,044.74 on child welfare services in 2018. Child welfare services are all of the direct and administrative services that state agencies provide to children and families. $187,593,061.00 were allocated from the federal government and $55,310,885.00 came from state and local funds.

Federal Funding Sources
The breakdown of the $187,593,061.00 in federal funding received in West Virginia in 2018 (See Pie Chart):
- $4,398,645 as part of the Title IV-E Foster Care Program.
- $38,893,604 as part of the Title IV-E Adoption Assistance Program.
- West Virginia’s sum of expenditures for Social Service Block Grants in 2020 was $19,849,637.


Ibid.


Ibid


